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Sustainable development: Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Awsan **Al-Aud** (Yemen)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 49 (see A/63/414, para. 2). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 24th and 31st meetings, on 4 November and 11 December 2008. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/63/SR.24 and 31).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/63/L.18 and A/C.2/63/L.54

2. At the 24th meeting, on 4 November, the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session" (A/C.2/63/L.18), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005, 61/205 of 20 December 2006 and 62/195 of 19 December 2007,

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"*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Recognizing* the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, and noting the need to consider possible options to address this need,

"*Taking into account* Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'),

"*Reaffirming* the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries,

"*Emphasizing* that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

"*Recognizing* the need to accelerate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, including through the provision of additional financial resources for that purpose,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session and the decisions contained therein;

"2. *Welcomes* the continued efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme in shifting emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results within its budget and programme of work, and also welcomes, in this regard, the results-based medium-term strategy for the period 2010-2013 for use in formulating the strategic frameworks, programmes of work and budgets for the periods 2010-2011 and 2012-2013;

"3. *Stresses* the need to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, in this regard calls upon Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance, and also calls upon the United Nations Environment Programme to continue its efforts to fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan through strengthened cooperation with other stakeholders, based on their comparative advantages;

"4. *Emphasizes* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, at all levels, and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission;

"5. *Recognizes* that the current global food, energy and financial crises as well as climate change would adversely impact sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and emphasizes the need for mobilization of new and additional resources to address, inter alia, these challenges;

"6. *Emphasizes* the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and welcomes the continued active participation of the United Nations Environment Programme in the United Nations Development Group and the Environment Management Group;

"7. *Notes* the findings of the fourth *Global Environment Outlook: Environment for Development*, published by the United Nations Environment Programme, that current environmental degradation represents a serious challenge for human well-being and sustainable development;

"8. *Recognizes* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening the scientific base of the Programme, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, in the area of protection of the environment, including through the provision of adequate financial resources, and in this regard emphasizes the importance of building on the experiences gained from the preparation of different global environmental assessments as well as other relevant developments in this field;

"9. *Reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

"10. *Invites* Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

"11. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

"12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session, under the item entitled 'Sustainable development', a sub-item entitled 'Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session'."

3. At its 31st meeting, on 11 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session" (A/C.2/63/L.54), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Andrei Metelitsa (Belarus), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.18.

4. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of programme budget implications arising from draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.54 (see A/C.2/63/SR.31).

5. At the same meeting, the Vice-Chairman (Belarus) made a statement, after which the representative of Germany orally corrected the draft resolution.

6. Also at its 31st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.54, as orally corrected (see para. 8).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.54, draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.18 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, 53/242 of 28 July 1999, 56/193 of 21 December 2001, 57/251 of 20 December 2002, 58/209 of 23 December 2003, 59/226 of 22 December 2004, 60/189 of 22 December 2005, 61/205 of 20 December 2006 and 62/195 of 19 December 2007,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[1]

Recognizing the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, and noting the need to consider possible options to address this need, including through the ongoing informal consultative process on the institutional framework for United Nations environmental activities,

Taking into account Agenda 21[2] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[3]

Reaffirming the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority and principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries,

Emphasizing that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recognizing the need to accelerate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,[4] including through the provision of additional financial resources for that purpose,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its tenth special session[5] and the decisions contained therein;[6]

2. *Welcomes* the continued efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme in shifting emphasis from delivery of outputs to achievement of results

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[1] See resolution 60/1.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/63/25).

[6] Ibid., annex I.

within its budget and programme of work, and also welcomes, in this regard, the United Nations Environment Programme Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013, which is results-based and elaborates six cross-cutting thematic priority areas of work and various means of implementation as a way of strengthening the work of the United Nations Environment Programme, bearing in mind all the relevant provisions of decisions of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, and in this regard invites partner organizations to cooperate closely with the United Nations Environment Programme;

3. *Stresses* the need to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,[4] in this regard calls upon Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance, and welcomes the particular emphasis of the Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013 on significantly enhancing the capacity of the United Nations Environment Programme to deliver on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;

4. *Recognizes* the progress made so far in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,[7] particularly through its Quick Start Programme,[8] and invites Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to engage actively and cooperate closely to support the Strategic Approach implementation activities of the United Nations Environment Programme, including through providing adequate resources;

5. *Also recognizes* the global challenges posed by mercury, and, in this regard, welcomes the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group on mercury, established by the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session,[9] to review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments, and notes that the Governing Council will consider the outcomes of the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group at its twenty-fifth regular session;

6. *Emphasizes* the need for the United Nations Environment Programme, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21[2] and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,[3] at all levels, and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission;

7. *Notes* that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, at its tenth special session, emphasized the need to implement fully its decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance,[10] and also notes the continued discussions scheduled for the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council;

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[7] See the report of the International Conference on Chemicals Management on the work of its first session (SAICM/ICCM.1/7), annexes I-III.

[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/62/25), annex I, decision 24/3.

[9] Ibid.

[10] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/57/25), annex I.

8. *Recognizes* that the current global crises could adversely impact sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and emphasizes the need for mobilization of adequate funding to address their environmental aspects, and takes note of the proposal of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, following consultations with the Bureau of the Governing Council and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, to address "Global crisis: national chaos" as one of the themes for the ministerial consultations, to be held at the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council;

9. *Emphasizes* the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and to enhance the cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and regional and subregional organizations, and welcomes the continued active participation of the United Nations Environment Programme in the United Nations Development Group and the Environment Management Group;

10. *Takes note* of the finding of *Global Environment Outlook: Environment for Development*,[11] published by the United Nations Environment Programme, that current environmental degradation represents a serious challenge for human well-being and sustainable development, and expresses its deep concern over the evidence of unprecedented environmental changes at all levels, including possible irreversible changes with potentially negative implications for economic and social development, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups in society;

11. *Reaffirms* the need to strengthen the scientific base of the United Nations Environment Programme, as recommended by the intergovernmental consultation on strengthening of the scientific base of the Programme, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, in the area of protection of the environment, including through the provision of adequate financial resources, and in this respect, emphasizes the importance of building on the experiences gained from the preparation of different global environmental assessments as well as other relevant developments in this field;

12. *Reiterates* the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlines the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget;

13. *Invites* Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Environment Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

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[11] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.III.D.19.

15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session".